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Friday, 8 April 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda items 45 and 55 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/2005)

Mrs. 'Utoikamanu (Tonga): First of all, we would like to associate ourselves with the condolences expressed by delegations on the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II. We also join with those who have expressed sympathy on the demise of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III of Monaco.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened these meetings, which provide us with an opportunity to share our views on the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005), in preparation for the high-level plenary meeting to take place at the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

We thank the Secretary-General for his report, which highlights many issues of crucial importance to Member countries and provides us with a framework for comprehensive and constructive dialogue with a view to achieving a final outcome document that ensures the delivery of clear and positive outputs.

At this juncture, we would like to associate ourselves with the statements made by the representative of Jamaica, Chairman of the Group of 77 and China; the representative of Samoa, Chairman of the Pacific Islands Forum Group in New York; and the representative of Tuvalu, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States. The latter highlighted our wish for recognition, in the draft outcome document to be placed before our leaders in September, of the centrality of development issues and the importance of the Mauritius Strategy as a comprehensive strategy for meeting Alliance members' Millennium Development Goals.

I wish to make preliminary remarks on the specific issues raised in the Secretary-General's report, which are of national interest to my country, and will make more detailed comments in the coming weeks during the scheduled discussion of the four clusters.

With regard to the section entitled "Freedom from want", development issues have always been at the forefront of Tonga's agenda. We therefore share the view that we need to see the Millennium Development Goals as part of an even larger development agenda and to have a sense of urgency with regard to achieving the Goals. Through our many years of experience in the development field, we recognize that in order to achieve the goals and objectives set, a holistic approach is required in ensuring that the required institutional, legal, social and political framework and the financial means are in place to implement those plans.

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In that regard, although we are well aware that each developing country has the primary responsibility for its own development, we also acknowledge that support in various forms is required at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. We therefore welcome the call for those developed countries that have not yet done so to establish timetables to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance (ODA) by no later than 2015, starting significant increases no later than 2006 and reaching 0.5 per cent by 2009. The work currently in progress on the important initiative on innovative sources of financing to complement ODA is also welcome.

Concerning the subject of "freedom from fear", Tonga supports a comprehensive and collective approach to security — an approach that tackles new and old threats and that addresses the security concerns of all States. We also share the view, as espoused in the Secretary-General's report, that we must act to ensure that catastrophic terrorism never becomes a reality.

In the context of "freedom to live in dignity", the role of human dignity is also important. We agree that the rule of law is the essential foundation for political stability, social progress and sustained development.

With regard to reform of the United Nations, Tonga supports comprehensive and holistic reform that will enable the Organization to respond and adapt more effectively to the needs and circumstances of the twenty-first century.

On the question of reform of the Security Council, we support the view of the Secretary-General that Member States should agree to take a decision on that important issue before the summit in September 2005 and that it would be highly preferable for Member States to take that vital decision by consensus. However, if they are unable to reach consensus, that must not become an excuse for postponing action. In addition, Tonga would like to reaffirm its support for model A as the most appropriate model for reforming the Security Council, as well as its support for permanent Council membership for Japan.

Tonga welcomes the proposal by the Secretary-General to improve coordination between the United Nations and regional organizations in view of the important support that countries receive from those organizations.

In conclusion, I should like to assure you, Sir, of my Government's support for you as President of the General Assembly as you continue to guide us through these consultations and in the finalization of the draft outcome document to be placed before our leaders in September.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): I should like to bow my head in tribute to the memory of His Holiness Pope John Paul II. At his funeral today, the people of Cameroon were present. His Excellency Mr. Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon, and his wife took part in the ceremony. With the passing of John Paul II, the world lost a tireless messenger of peace and a great servant of humanity. I should also like to express to the Principality of Monaco our sincere condolences on the death of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

Permit me to thank you, Mr. President, and to congratulate you on the idea of holding these public meetings of the General Assembly in lieu of the informal consultations of the plenary that were initially planned. By doing so, you have given Member States and regional groups an opportunity to express their preliminary points of view on the important report of the Secretary-General before us (A/59/2005).

First of all, I should like to indicate that, for my country, the report is unquestionably a comprehensive document, a remarkable effort that contains conceptual elements of great import for the Organization. In a very effective way, it realistically and pragmatically defines the interaction among development, peace, security, freedom and justice.

Before making some preliminary comments in my national capacity, I wish fully to associate myself with the views expressed by my colleagues the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the representative of Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the representative of Malawi on behalf of the African Union.

The Secretary-General has explained that the report now before us was based on his relevant experience, on his convictions and, above all, on the report of the Millennium Project — Sachs report — and the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565).

My country agrees that we should carry out in-depth reform of the Organization to enable it to adapt

to all the changes that have taken place over the past 60 years and, in particular, to enable it to respond effectively to current challenges, including the new threats that are undermining peace and security.

From this rostrum, President Biya stated in that respect:

> "The necessary reforms in its principal organs — the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat — must allow all nations, without discrimination, to participate actively in the conduct of international public affairs.
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> "This means, inter alia, greater transparency within the Security Council, in its working methods and in the equitable geographical representation of all regions of the world. It also means strengthening the role and responsibilities of the General Assembly in the areas of international peace maintenance, security and cooperation. It means a Secretariat that can reflect the universality of the Organization and that has adequate resources and greater authority." (*A/51/PV.40, p. 5*)

Similarly, Cameroon agrees that there is a need to strengthen our legal and institutional arsenal in order to expedite the universalization of the ideals of democracy and freedom and to guarantee respect by all for all human rights everywhere, including the right to development. All of those concerns are especially important and basic. The same is true of our struggle to promote development for all and to eradicate poverty and hunger, which is equally fundamental to our survival.

Our inclusive exercise can, in the short term, produce results acceptable to the majority only if that which is important is strictly paired with that which is urgent. In that regard, it seems to me at first glance that the report under consideration does not appear to do sufficient justice to the imperative of development. Every proposal to free humankind of want boils down to wishes and to a solidarity that may be voluntary but that contains no quantified or binding measures.

And yet we are urgently bound to create the optimum conditions to generate more resources and more wealth and to ensure that they will then be equitably distributed among our countries and peoples.

The Secretary-General's report, careful to avoid recommending strict and specific commitments on the part of the wealthy countries, seems to imply that the poor are poor by their own fault and that they alone are responsible for the causes that create or exacerbate their penury, in particular the trade, financial and economic imbalances that underlie current inter-State relations.

And yet we have been given to understand that the High-level Meeting in September will be our last chance to mobilize all our resources to achieve the Millennium Development Goals on schedule. As President Biya said at the summit of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome in 1996, at issue here is more than simply the questions we have raised and the problems we have described; it is a matter of where people can find a place in our societies. Those are the stakes. Indeed, what kind of freedom can there be for those who are starving? What kind of democracy can exist in a country ravaged by famine or pandemic? Of what dignity can we speak for a man who cannot eat his fill, can neither read nor write, and whose children are threatened with the same fate?

We must therefore reframe our exercise by restoring the priority of development, with commitments that include specific financial ones pegged to a timetable. We need a partnership based on a genuine contract of solidarity and a co-development pact between North and South.

At the conceptual and institutional levels, the Secretary-General's report courageously addresses some fundamental questions. It broaches the thorny issue of the use of force, and some of its suggestions will keep us busy, long after September 2005, considering the various points of view that have been expressed.

The interpretation of Article 51 of the Charter and the role of the Security Council in codifying the use of force when collective responsibility must be assumed or in the case of legitimate self-defence are all issues that warrant careful consideration. It would be desirable, inter alia, to avoid enshrining the current institutional imbalance in favour of the Security Council and to the detriment of the General Assembly. We must also take care not to marginalize or weaken the International Court of Justice, given that our heads of State in 2000 made the primacy of law and respect for the Court's decisions the basis of our Organization's functioning and relations among States. Any credible reform must enhance the legitimacy of

the United Nations, improve transparency within it, and be sufficiently inclusive.

From that perspective, we may well question the criteria for participation in certain proposed institutions, such as the peacebuilding commission and even the human rights council. The truth is, with respect to the latter, that we are not even entirely sure of the purpose of the reform of the current Commission on Human Rights.

We are all accustomed to the way in which new initiatives are addressed in our Organization. They are often limited by financial factors. What are the expected costs of the reforms envisaged? That question warrants consideration at a time when zero growth in the Organization's budget is being called for. Will those reforms have an impact on resources earmarked for economic and social issues?

I understand full well that the President of the General Assembly expects us to offer concrete proposals. My delegation is eager to participate in a constructive and open spirit in the planned thematic discussions. We hope that we shall undertake this exercise, so vital to the Organization, all together and not some in opposition to others. My delegation hopes that, ultimately, the decisions to be made, which could commit our States and peoples for several generations, will be made without opposition and adopted by the broadest possible consensus. That will require of us a great deal of patience and, above all, a heightened sense of compromise.

Mr. Stagno Ugarte (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like, first of all, to associate myself with the expressions of solidarity and condolence to the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See on the sad passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II and to the Permanent Mission of the Principality of Monaco on the profoundly felt loss of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

I should like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on having convened these very timely consultations on the report of the Secretary-General (A/59/2005) and other substantive inputs to the 2005 summit event. My delegation will address the various recommendations in further detail during the consultations scheduled to take place shortly on each of the four clusters. We take this opportunity to express our support for the majority of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report and to assure you, Sir, that we will participate actively and constructively in our common endeavour to achieve a successful outcome to the 2005 summit.

My delegation associates itself with the statements made by the representatives of Jamaica, as Chairman of the Group of 77 and China, and of Argentina, as Chairman of the Rio Group.

I would like, however, to address a number of key issues with regard to which we believe the report of the Secretary-General is still wanting. During the informal consultations on the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565), we expressed our surprise at the report's failure to address internal threats and challenges as immediate, troubling and damaging as the glaring failures in the oversight and management of the oil-for-food programme and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). We strongly urge the Secretary-General to exorcise those demons openly and resolutely. We welcome the fact that the Secretary-General has addressed both issues indirectly, but we also believe that neither will be properly resolved if we continue to understate the truth.

In paragraph 113 of the report, in what we believe to be a true understatement, the Secretary-General refers to "recent allegations of misconduct by United Nations administrators and peacekeepers". On oil-for-food, the Independent Inquiry Committee's findings include conflict of interest, pre-emption and frustration of competitive bidding processes for political reasons, non-documentation of decision-making processes, non-verification of references provided by bidding parties and other systematic violations of formal procurement and management rules and procedures.

Although a number of internal reforms are currently under way to increase transparency and accountability in the area of administration, unfortunately none of them seems sufficiently important to merit inclusion in the report. We respectfully disagree with such omissions. We believe that now that the repeated and knowing short-circuiting and violation of formal rules and procedures has been documented, correcting the failings of the system is central to the credibility of the United Nations.

With regard to MONUC and — since the problem is not unique to that mission — to other peacekeeping missions, the allegations of misconduct include the

systematic exploitation of minors for sexual favours and personal gain and subsequent intimidation and retaliation aimed at keeping victims and witnesses silent, as well as active interference by contingent commanders and others in ongoing investigations. Although paragraph 113 of the report of the Secretary-General refers to the sexual exploitation of minors, the solution that is offered is clearly insufficient, as in many parts of the mission there is zero compliance with "zero tolerance".

Given that as long ago as 1997 the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) reported that staff rules and bulletins too often protected staff members from being held accountable for their actions and did too little to protect the interests of the United Nations, we firmly believe that anything less than absolute transparency and full accountability can no longer be tolerated.

What is needed in both cases — and with respect to other recent disclosures of alleged misconduct — is effective enforcement and disciplinary, financial and criminal accountability, whenever and wherever it is proved that an abuse or crime has been committed. In that context, we welcome the interim reports of the Independent Inquiry Committee, and we are looking forward to the findings and recommendations of the final report. We also wholeheartedly endorse the recommendations contained in the report submitted by His Royal Highness Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein of Jordan (A/59/710), and we congratulate him on having conducted a very welcome first-ever comprehensive review of a decade-long problem.

It must be said that the report of the Secretary-General is bewilderingly selective in the relative urgency that it accords to the various aspects of the institutional reform envisioned for the 2005 summit. On the General Assembly, which the report rightly calls the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations, and whose revitalization we have spent more than a decade discussing, adopting more than 10 resolutions on the subject, the Secretary-General does not seem to feel the same sense of urgency as he does when addressing Security Council reform. Although it is certainly incumbent on Member States ultimately to agree on revitalization of the General Assembly, the report does not take the opportunity to bring pressure to bear regarding some of the bolder recommendations.

In particular, on the checks and balances that must exist between the General Assembly and the Security Council, the report, regrettably, does not take up any of the recommendations contained in the non-paper prepared by the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform. That is paradoxical, since the Secretary-General's report frequently refers to the need for collective strategies, collective institutions and a sense of collective responsibility. But it fails to put the reform of our most collective body at the centre of any meaningful United Nations reform effort. In that context, to rephrase paragraph 169 of the report, we believe that no reform of the United Nations would be complete without reform of the General Assembly.

When it comes to Security Council reform, the report not only endorses an early harvest but, moreover, allows for one that is not the result of consensus. Furthermore, the report really calls only for expansion, referring to working methods just in passing — as if enlargement in and of itself were a solution to the question of representation: it certainly failed to be such in 1963. In that context, we were surprised by the rather imprecise reference in paragraph 168 to improvements in working methods. Some may argue that, of late, a number of attempts have been made to tackle cluster II reform issues regarding transparency. But those are clearly insufficient by any standard of accountability. The Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform has made many useful recommendations on working methods, and we regret that the Secretary-General did not specifically endorse any of them.

Finally, we believe that the Charter confers privileges and responsibilities on the permanent members. In the light of the fact that Security Council expansion is distracting our collective attention from the priorities set out in resolution 58/291, we respectfully call on the permanent members to indicate, promptly and in detail, which reform option they would vote in favour of and ratify, as they are required to do under Article 108 of the Charter. The developing countries have too many expectations riding on the 2005 summit event, and it seems to us that our principal focus throughout the preparatory process should be the development agenda.

On development, we wholeheartedly agree with the assessment contained in paragraph 30 in the sense that the Millennium Development Goals are only "a part of an even larger development agenda". For the

many reasons enumerated in paragraph 30, we are worried by the fact that some of the broader issues covered by international conferences and the evolving needs of middle-income developing countries, both of which require effective implementation, are not fully addressed in the report. In particular, we are very worried by the assessment contained in paragraph 47 that, for many middle-income countries, most of the resources needed to fund the national development strategies "can and should be mobilized domestically". That is all the more surprising when we consider that middle-income countries are home to 280 million people who live on less than $1 a day and 870 million people who live on less than $2 a day. Moreover, that assessment runs counter to the *Global Monitoring Report 2004* issued by the World Bank, which clearly states that aid plays an important role in the middle-income countries

> "as a catalyst for reform, as a reinforcer of domestic efforts to tackle large pockets of poverty ... and as a provider of countercyclical support to reduce vulnerability to financial shocks and help deal with their consequences" (*Global Monitoring Report 2004, chapter 11, para. 24*).

Regarding trade, we strongly endorse the call for a pro-development outcome of the Doha round contained in paragraph 55. However, we believe that duty-free and quota-free market access for exports should be granted to all developing countries and not to particular subsets of those, as recommended by the report. The so-called first step recommended in paragraph 55 is inconsistent with free trade and, according to the *Global Monitoring Report 2004*, with the facts, as trade policies in the so-called Quad countries are most restrictive towards middle-income countries with gross domestic product per capita in the $1,500-to-$5,000 range. Furthermore, growth resulting from a pro-development Doha round that benefits all developing countries could increase real income in those countries by $350 billion by 2015 and lift an additional 140 million people out of poverty by that year, according to the *Global Monitoring Report 2004*.

Regarding aid, we have agreed that developed countries would contribute 0.7 per cent of their gross national income to official development assistance (ODA), yet 35 years later, only five have reached or surpassed that mark. Yet, we do not find any call by the Secretary-General for urgency on that matter. There is no "early harvest" here. That is unfortunate in light of the fact that the Secretary-General affirms in paragraph 48 that "global ODA currently stands at 0.25 per cent — still well short of the 0.33 percent reached in the late 1980s" and acknowledges that recent commitments for future increases "reflect debt write-offs and dollar depreciation rather than net long-term finance".

On the issue of quality of aid disbursements, practices and procedures, we welcome the commitments made at the High-Level Forum on Harmonization in Paris, and urge United Nations funds and programmes to engage in the harmonization agenda.

Faced with new threats and challenges, the international community requires clear and foreseeable rules to govern in a peaceful, equitable and predictable way the relations among nations. The respect and promotion of the rule of law and human rights must necessarily underlie any strategy to strengthen the United Nations system. We congratulate the Secretary-General for amending the High-level Panel's highly selective approach to the rule of law and its passing consideration of human rights.

Although we are, in general, pleased with paragraphs 133-147, we do not believe that rule of law assistance should be confined to conflict and post-conflict situations. The rule of law must be mainstreamed throughout the United Nations. As regards paragraph 139, we welcome the call upon States to accept the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, although we firmly believe that it is also necessary to withdraw any reservations to the full exercise of that jurisdiction.

On transnational terrorism, we believe that institutional reform is required in order to maximize the Organization's comparative advantages in facilitating and enforcing a collective, principled and comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy. Costa Rica has already introduced its initiative to establish the post of a United Nations high commissioner on terrorism. We continue to believe that it would be the best instrument for creating a genuine sense of ownership and collective responsibility in United Nations counter-terrorism activities.

We are encouraged by the recent adoption of the text of a draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and we welcome the call by the Secretary-General to conclude the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism before the end of the sixtieth session of the

General Assembly. On the question of the definition of terrorism, however, and unlike the general principles for a definition proposed in the report of the Secretary-General in the wake of the High-level Panel report, we believe that it is incumbent on the Ad Hoc Committee to pursue its progress on the elaboration of a detailed technical definition, as is appropriate for an instrument of criminal law.

To conclude, allow me to express our determination to spare no effort in the coming months to contribute constructively to a comprehensive pro-development outcome for the 2005 summit event.

Mr. Dzundev (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): I would like to thank you, Sir, for organizing consultations as part of the continuous preparation process of the 2005 summit. Although my delegation has aligned itself with the European Union statement, I would like to present additional views on the Secretary-General's report "In larger freedom".

Macedonia welcomes the Secretary-General's report. The report rightly addresses the major issues and challenges we are faced with and gives us a sufficient basis for discussions in the following weeks. In our view, what is important now is to live up to the expectations to meet the challenges if we are really determined to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. We should also bear in mind that the forthcoming discussions and consultations should take into consideration the previous reports and the deliberations we had about them.

We agree with the Secretary-General's statement that, in order to achieve the more effective multilateralism that we all strive for, what is needed now is no more declarations or promises, but action to fulfil the promises already made. I also believe, as has been underlined by many representatives and included in the reports of the Millennium Project and the High-level Panel, that there are interlinkages between development, security and human rights, and that international economic cooperation, the maintenance of international peace and security, and the protection of human rights continue to be the bases of United Nations action.

One cannot but agree and strongly support the words of the Secretary-General in part IV when he speaks about the freedom to live in dignity. We fully support the call to strengthen democracy and the rule of law and to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms. Only the full observance of human rights instruments can promote democracy and show respect for human dignity. In that context, let me recall once again the important message of the Secretary-General at the opening of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly that full respect and implementation of the principle of the rule of law at both the national and international levels are of equal importance. Therefore, we have only one choice — to respect them unconditionally.

In that context, we value the proposal to establish a new, third council: the human rights council. That proposal requires further elaboration by the Secretary-General, as well as further thought and consideration by all delegations.

We acknowledge the need, identified in the report, to implement a comprehensive United Nations counter-terrorism strategy, and we urge States to reach agreement on a definition of terrorism and to successfully conclude a comprehensive convention in the coming months. It is very encouraging that, just a few days ago, Member States agreed on the draft text of an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. That is the right direction to pursue and a very promising step in the overall ongoing exercise. It is also a strong indication that we are able to change things and move ahead.

Let me take this opportunity to stress once again the importance of the proposal to establish a Peacebuilding Commission. Further details on that matter are also needed in order to help bridge the gap between addressing and containing a conflict on the one hand and the post-conflict situation and peacebuilding on the other, so that countries can move forward without reverting to conflict as we have seen in some cases.

As rightly pointed out in the Secretary-General's report, ongoing action is needed to ensure environmental sustainability. In that respect, I would like to inform the Assembly that my country has assumed its share of world responsibility, including by ratifying the Kyoto Protocol last September. I do believe that far more resources should be mobilized in order to mitigate the negative effects of climate change.

Regarding financing for development, we support the timetable set out in the Secretary-General's report to achieve what has already been agreed by 2015.

We agree that, as stated in the report, the United Nations must be reshaped in ways not previously imagined, and with a boldness and speed not previously shown. As we have already emphasized, we support the reform of the Security Council. In our opinion, the Security Council has to be reformed by increasing its membership and including both developing and developed countries. Moreover, in order to equip the Council to carry out its primary responsibility — that is, to maintain international peace and security — it should be reformed in a way that provides for better geographical representation, increases its accountability and the democratic character of its methods of work and makes its decision-making process more transparent. We believe that this issue deserves to be treated with the utmost transparency and that it should, to the extent possible, be the subject of broad agreement.

As underlined during the general debate in September 2004 and during previous informal consultations, Macedonia supports an increase in the membership of the Security Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. However, as I have stated previously, we cannot agree with the proposed structure of the regional groups as presented in the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565). The current regional structure should remain in place and be utilized as the basis for the expansion of the future Security Council. In the same vein, let me point out that our delegation aligned itself with the statement made by the representative of Estonia on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

We also believe that our attention and efforts should be proportionally directed to the reform of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. We welcome the suggestions and proposals made in that respect in the report of the Secretary-General.

Of no less importance is reform of the Secretariat. New realities also demand increased responsibilities and responses tailored to new challenges, as well as capacity to meet them. The request for more preventive action also requires qualified human resources. Furthermore, there is a growing awareness that we should delegate more responsibilities and share the task with regional organizations that have already proven their capacity, knowledge and skill and that can play a leading role in certain areas. Today as in past years, there are many examples on the ground pointing to the need for a clear division of labour. This would also make it possible for us to save financial resources and distribute them in areas where they are needed most. That would enable us to concentrate on issues where the role of the United Nations is essential. What I am trying to say is that we have to eliminate competition between organizations, overlap in mandates and the tendency to prolong mandates or activities beyond what is necessary. In that context, the role of the United Nations on the ground must be revitalized.

We look forward to a frank and constructive discussion, not only today but also during the discussions we will have in the coming months, in order that we can all come closer to what we want to achieve before and during September 2005.

Mr. Berruga (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, my delegation would like to associate itself with the words of condolence conveyed to the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See on the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II. We also wish to express our condolences to the Permanent Mission of the Principality of Monaco on the passing of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

With the presentation of the report of the Secretary-General (A/59/2005), the proposals of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565) and the report of the Millennium Project — the Sachs report — we now have three major and very important intellectual and political inputs to guide our deliberations. The consultations that you have organized, Mr. President, make it possible for every delegation to set out its positions on key aspects of the United Nations. However, we should keep in mind that once the consultations have been completed, the main challenge to the Organization will remain, namely, to reach agreements on how to implement and adequately follow up the measures we adopt. Mexico believes that we are on the cusp of extensive and complex negotiations. The successive rounds of consultations have given us an indication of the feelings and national positions of Member States. Negotiations are now needed to reach agreement and to implement our commitments. We must establish the terms for those overall negotiations without further delay. Those terms should meet the following criteria.

First, they must preserve the unity of purpose and goals collectively pursued at the United Nations.

Secondly, they must strengthen the framework for action and the effectiveness of multilateral diplomacy.

Thirdly, and very importantly, they must be clear about the fact that challenges and threats should determine the changes to be made to the institutional architecture, and not the other way around. The reforms we promote must be aimed at effectively addressing the major problems of development, security and human rights. That will be the template for defining the sort of structures and institutions we need.

Fourthly, the world's major problems are cross-cutting in nature. Our world Organization therefore requires comprehensive reform. The relationship between security and development must be addressed simultaneously and with equal determination.

Fifthly, in addition to strengthening the efficiency of institutions, the terms of reference must also seek to strengthen their legitimacy, transparency and accountability.

Sixthly, the tenor of the negotiations should reflect a sense of urgency about restructuring our system, the need to produce benefits for all and the goal of giving due attention to challenges that no single country can solve on its own.

Lastly, we believe that the challenging road ahead of us should take us from debate to the forging of agreements, and then on to negotiations and the implementation of our collective decisions.

The countries members of the Group of Friends for United Nations Reform, which was formed on the initiative of President Vicente Fox, have had an opportunity to contribute to this process by issuing 14 documents containing proposals. We are quite willing to continue to support the efforts of the Secretary-General and your efforts, Mr. President. In the coming months, the Group will intensify its efforts to promote the implementation of various reform proposals.

Given the increasing complexity of today's challenges, my country has stressed the need for a comprehensive reform of the Organization. We believe that, as proposed by the Secretary-General, such reform comprises four fundamental aspects: development, security, the rule of law and human rights. However, that approach requires drawing up a new institutional architecture. The structure of our Organization must prove itself able to provide answers and solutions in those areas. It is both futile and risky to lose sight of that aspect of a balanced institutional reform such as that outlined by the Secretary-General in his report, which we believe deserves serious consideration.

It is necessary that each body responsible for those areas be given the authority and resources it needs to discharge its mandate. In practice, and given that its resolutions are binding under Article 25 of the Charter, the Security Council is the only principal organ with a demonstrated capacity to ensure compliance with its resolutions — a fact that is responsible for its relevance. We know that the legal nature of the resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights is different. Although we cannot deny Charter reality, it is nevertheless a serious thing that those bodies act separately and at a varying pace. The General Assembly is perfectly capable of remedying that lack of coordination in the work of the United Nations. It is for the Assembly to have an overall vision, as it represents the whole of the community of nations.

However, we note that General Assembly resolutions, although they reflect the main currents of world opinion, have alarmingly little capacity to effect change. If that trend continues, we will have a United Nations dominated by the Security Council, without counterbalancing weight or alternative. When humanitarian crises arise, it is thus the Security Council, and not the Commission on Human Rights, that takes the leading role. The recent case of Darfur is one example of that. When crises rooted in poverty and poor governance emerge, it is not the Economic and Social Council that has the resources and capacity to address them, it is the Security Council. The case of Haiti is a recent example of that.

Moreover, we run the risk of overburdening the agenda of the Security Council with additional tasks that will undermine its functioning and efficiency. In order that the Security Council may give timely attention to cases that truly merit it, the various bodies of the system must properly carry out their functions as part of an overall vision. Against that backdrop, any perceptive observer would conclude that reforming the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights is more urgent than reforming the Security Council, which, in that regard, appears to be enjoying relatively good health. However, we know that is not the case. The report places primary emphasis on reform of the Security Council, with only tangential

attention given to the other components of our system, including the General Assembly.

The Secretary-General proposes an Organization based on the interaction of three councils, a commission and the General Assembly — a new institutional organization that responds to the call for comprehensive reform. That vision could be launched on the basis of Mexico's proposal to create an institutional consultative mechanism in which the Presidents or Chairs of the principal organs and subsidiary bodies of the United Nations would take part as appropriate. That mechanism would help to identify in a timely manner situations that could lead to conflict and that need to be addressed from different perspectives and taking into account the mandate of each body. We believe that conflict prevention should be an ongoing task of the Organization as a whole.

In that connection, we support the proposal to establish a Peacebuilding Commission. Such a mechanism would help to strengthen international peace and security and therefore needs to be linked to the Security Council. However, that mechanism's work in the economic and social fields would place it close to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. Given that scenario, we think the General Assembly should first determine the new structure's mandate and proper place within the Organization.

With regard to the establishment of a Human Rights Council, we appreciate the Secretary-General's well-intentioned proposal to elevate the status of this important question. However, we believe that such a council's attributes and responsibilities should be determined by the General Assembly; they should overcome the shortcomings and weaknesses demonstrated by the Commission on Human Rights. A Human Rights Council should not ignore the important work of codification in which the Commission on Human Rights is now engaged. It should create the political environment necessary to enable it to take a pluralistic approach to the issue of human rights. That body should also have the capacity to warn of, and respond to, grave humanitarian crises. It should operate in a manner consistent with the norms of implementation we define with regard to the concept of the "responsibility to protect".

Mexico agrees with the Secretary-General that there is a close link between human rights and security. In that regard, we agree with the need for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to play a more active role in the deliberations of the Security Council and of a future Peacebuilding Commission. We are convinced that it is impossible to achieve peace and stability without an active policy to protect human rights. Security Council reform must be seen in the light of the new institutional architecture we are proposing. The Council's interaction with the proposed Human Rights Council — or with a reformed Commission on Human Rights — with a Peacebuilding Commission and with the Economic and Social Council will define a new structural balance and new rules.

With regard to the issue of Security Council reform, Mexico, along with other countries, has called for a negotiated consensus formula. That is the only way to avoid schisms within the Organization. We have already stated our preference for an increase in the number of elected members and in the length of their mandates, with the possibility of re-election for States whose behaviour has demonstrated a solid commitment to the purposes of the Organization. That option would encourage accountability.

Lastly, in the same context, the report of the Secretary-General is a call for a major change in the Organization. It is a powerful appeal for a round of negotiations resulting in better utilization of the institutions we have built together and, perhaps, in the addition of new structures. The new, strengthened multilateralism must be built upon broad consensus about the role we want to entrust to the United Nations as a political act. It therefore seems dangerous to the Organization's functioning to propose partial solutions that are not the product of broad agreement. Were we to follow that course of action, the most likely result would be a fragmented Organization vulnerable to damage brought about by antagonism.

Perhaps it is not realistic to expect that comprehensive reform of the United Nations can be carried out between now and September. What we can reasonably expect, however, is that in these few short months we can lay the foundations for negotiations that will produce the institutional architecture of the future. Mexico views the United Nations as a forum for cooperation and mutual respect and support among nations. It is not a battlefield, but a place to find comprehensive solutions. To destroy that spirit would be risky and probably irreversible.

Mr. Andanje (Kenya): My delegation joins other delegations in mourning the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II and the passing of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III of Monaco.

Mr. President, I thank you for convening these meetings to deliberate on the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005). I am confident that our ongoing deliberations will give further impetus to the preparations for the summit to be held in September. I commend the Secretary-General for his very bold and far-reaching proposals.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the representative of Malawi on behalf of the African Group and the representative of Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Since the report of the Secretary-General will be fully discussed under the four clusters of issues, my delegation will make substantive comments at that stage in the debate. Nevertheless, I wish to take this opportunity to make a few preliminary observations. From the perspective of a developing country, I am convinced the Secretary-General's report, which draws on the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, represents a significant shift in the tone of the debate within the United Nations. This is a process that is redefining the global development agenda. We are now focusing on ends rather than means, as highlighted by the report of the Millennium Project.

Today we are speaking of global partnerships based on mutual responsibility and mutual accountability. That is very encouraging to my delegation. Considering that at the United Nations change mostly occurs incrementally, I believe that the few small steps we have taken in a relatively short time will amount to something significant.

Members' interest in the proposals before the Assembly may vary, but I believe that should not detract from our broader objective of advancing our global development agenda. We should not lose sight of the fact that development is a prerequisite for peace, security and human rights. None of those issues can be advanced or ensured without the attainment of sustainable development.

There are areas in which my delegation feels that more concrete recommendations are required. For example, in the area of debt, it is the conviction of my delegation that further measures, including debt cancellation, should be undertaken to reduce outstanding indebtedness.

We welcome the recommendations made in the field of sustainable development. However, it is notable that the question of resources for institutions dealing with environmental issues was not clearly addressed. Similarly, the actions expected of Member States regarding the environment were not spelled out.

It is imperative that we all honour our obligations and commitments. My delegation welcomes the announcement by the United Kingdom and Germany of a timetable to reach the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance. We urge developed countries that have not yet done so to follow suit.

My delegation shares the Secretary-General's belief that individual States cannot go it alone. There is need for broad, deep and sustained cooperation among Member States. This September, we must take advantage of the prevailing goodwill to promote economic and social development and forge a consensus on how to respond to the new threats and challenges.

Our objective may be ambitious and well-meaning, but, in the absence of adequate resources, our efforts to advance our cause of building a prosperous and just world will come to naught. I believe that this important matter should be urgently addressed.

Finally, the various international conferences and summits give us an ideal framework for addressing development issues. It is my delegation's hope that, as we prepare for the summit, Member States will take into account their recommendations. It is incumbent upon us to meet our peoples' aspirations by taking advantage of this unique opportunity and coming up with tangible deliverables.

Mr. Yañez-Barnuevo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, like preceding delegations, I wish to pay profound tribute to the lasting memory of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, whose message of peace to the world still rings in this Hall. We also join in the condolences expressed to the Principality of Monaco and the Monegasque people on the deeply felt passing of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

Spain fully associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union.

In the search for a reformed Organization guided by the ideal of effective multilateralism at the service of our peoples, Spain wishes to work on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General (A/59/2005) — enriched by the contributions of Member States, because the report is not set in stone. We wish to contribute to our common objective: that our leaders' meeting at the September summit will fully respond to the urgent problems of the United Nations and the entire international community at this moment. We are making our contribution also as part of the Group of Friends for United Nations Reform, to which the Permanent Representative of Mexico referred.

The challenges are tremendous, and I am certain that our effort will need to be sustained even beyond the summit. However, as suggested in the speech of the presidency of the European Union, given that the proposals of the Secretary-General are ambitious, the goals we set for September must also be ambitious.

Among the challenges, I underline development, with the goal of overcoming the enormous economic and social inequalities present in the world. For too many people today, life is simply a question of survival.

I wish to recall that Spain co-sponsored and actively contributed to the Action against Hunger and Poverty initiative, signed parallel to the main part of the current session of the General Assembly by more than 100 heads of State or Government; we hope that it will begin to produce results very soon.

Spain is also committed to doing its share with respect to official development assistance. To that end, it has established a precise timetable of commitments to reach the targets of 0.33 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance by 2006 and 0.5 per cent by 2008. It will thus be feasible to reach 0.7 per cent of gross national income by 2012, before the date fixed in the Millennium Declaration. Africa should be the focus of that extra effort in coming years, but we shall not forget our commitment to medium-income countries or their specific development needs.

It is equally urgent for us to move quickly to put an end to prejudice and eradicate intolerance, building bridges of understanding and cooperation. A number of Member States, including Spain, have proposed valuable initiatives to achieve that goal because we are convinced that the trend towards growing division, even confrontation, between peoples of different cultures and civilizations — fundamentally between the West and the Arab and Islamic world — is one of the most serious threats to the international community. We are further convinced that solving that serious problem holds the key to other challenges the world faces today. We regret that this issue has so far been absent from the various inputs in preparation for the summit, including the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565) and the report of the Secretary-General. We stand ready to work with other delegations and with you, Mr. President, so that the declaration to be adopted in September will send the clear message that we need to overcome those differences through dialogue and cooperation.

In reforming the United Nations, emphasis should be placed on preserving the institutional balance among its main organs, with each working according to its functions and areas of competence and all pursuing the same goal, within the framework of the Charter and always to the benefit of the international community.

It is in that context that we must consider the reform of the Security Council. Spain has made clear its preference for Council reform based on the broadest possible consensus among Member States. We believe that we cannot marginalize a significant number of Member States on such a serious issue with such important consequences. As evidenced in the recent consultations, many States do not consider desirable either model A or model B as presented in the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and the report of the Secretary-General. New opportunities for representation of all in the Security Council must be found so that the reform can be implemented within a short, foreseeable period of time.

We are convinced we can make irreversible progress in the coming months while avoiding any steps that would result only in greater division among Member States. In the coming days, many delegations will begin to take steps towards convergence. To do that, we need all delegations that share these concerns to support us by helping us identify the elements of the broadest possible agreement of the entire Organization.

In brief, we hope that this spirit of cooperation for reaching the broadest possible consensus among all

Member States will guide all our work and discussions for the reform of the Organization under your expert leadership, Mr. President.

Mr. Leslie (Belize). First, I join you, Mr. President, and colleagues who have spoken before me in expressing sincere condolences to all Roman Catholics and others throughout the world on the loss of a great Pope, John Paul II. He was a great example for us as Members of the United Nations, and for all peoples of the world.

We also take this opportunity to stand in solidarity with the people of the Principality of Monaco and to express our sadness at the loss of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

Today I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) that are Members of the United Nations. At the outset, we align ourselves with the statements of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77 and China and the Alliance of Small Island States.

CARICOM would also like to thank you, Mr. President, for your efforts to ensure that the preparatory process for the 2005 high-level plenary event is at once inclusive, open-ended and transparent. We reaffirm our commitment to cooperate with you, your facilitators and, most important, all other Member States to ensure a mutually beneficial outcome.

The Secretary-General's report (A/59/2005) heralds new momentum in the preparatory process and for the reform process of the United Nations as a whole. We would like to build upon that momentum by identifying concrete steps for the realization of the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes and the commitments of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields. Likewise, we seize this moment to engage with all to ascertain the institutional reforms and arrangements necessary for a more effective United Nations.

Indeed, the Secretary-General's report is an important contribution to our deliberations and reflects the Secretary-General's views on those items on which he believes action is both vital and achievable in the coming months. CARICOM member States appreciate those views. We are in the process of reviewing the recommendations contained in the report alongside the views and recommendations articulated by Member States.

The high-level meeting provides a unique opportunity to refocus global attention on matters of development. The meeting should take firm and decisive action to advance the broad global development agenda, including that of the world's poorest and most vulnerable societies, and to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the management of global economic affairs. There is evidence that developing countries have embraced their commitments, set out in the Monterrey Consensus, to reallocate and mobilize more domestic resources, reform institutions to suit national priorities and adopt effective, nationally owned economic and social policies that can spur economic growth.

However, as the Secretary-General stated in his 2004 report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration (A/59/282), while these actions are all necessary to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, they are far from sufficient. Developed countries must also fulfil their responsibilities by increasing and improving development assistance, concluding a new development-oriented trade round, eliminating their trade-distorting actions in agriculture, embracing wider and deeper debt relief and fostering technology transfer.

The Secretary-General's report and other inputs to this process have focused almost exclusively on increasing official development assistance (ODA) support. Increasing ODA alone, without addressing the indebtedness of poor and middle-income developing countries, promoting foreign direct investment flows to a broader range of developing countries, reforming the global trading system and addressing the systemic deficiencies in the global economic and financial system will not result in sustained growth and development.

Under the Monterrey Consensus, all States made an important commitment to reform global economic governance. The creation of institutions and the exercise of power and decision-making at the national and global levels must be guided by the principles and values of justice, equity, democracy, participation, transparency, accountability and inclusion. If support for democracy and open markets is to be maintained, globalization must be more inclusive and its benefits must be more equitably distributed. These goals cannot be achieved without a radically reformed system of global governance and effective global institutions.

There is an urgent need for a more accommodating international environment that recognizes the inherent vulnerabilities of small island developing States and that addresses those vulnerabilities when considering their development, financial and trade needs. We are concerned that the Secretary-General's report does not focus sufficiently on the needs and unique circumstances of small island developing States.

Our emphasis upon development should not be interpreted as indifference to security issues. CARICOM member States recognize the inextricable link between development and security. Indeed, our emphasis upon development is in part related to our security concerns. Likewise, our security concerns are related to development. Drug trafficking, trafficking in small arms and light weapons and the operation of transnational organized criminal networks in the region have not only strained our security infrastructure but also hindered our development.

CARICOM would like to acknowledge the Secretary-General's comprehensive concept of collective security, which aims to address new and old threats and the security concerns of small States. Indeed, we consider this to be a sound approach towards achieving a security consensus. CARICOM would further emphasize that any security consensus must be consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We do not favour any proposal that would have the effect of reinterpreting the Charter. The Charter provides the framework within which States conduct their international relations. It is the foundation of our multilateral system. It is the scale upon which we balance the interests of States, large and small alike. From that there should be no derogation.

Of course, CARICOM agrees that the multilateral system needs strengthening if it is to be effective. The Secretary-General's recommendations on the revitalization of the General Assembly are steps in the right direction, as are the recommendations for the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council. For CARICOM, reform of the Security Council must address both its working methods and its expansion so as to ensure that it is open, democratic and effective. In that regard, CARICOM believes that the proposals of the High-level Panel for the expansion of the Council should be examined closely, having due regard for the geopolitical realities of today and the need to ensure that the Council is more broadly representative of the international community as a whole, even if such examination prompts us to seek a middle ground between model A and model B.

Those are our preliminary views on the report. CARICOM members intend to make substantive contributions on specific areas during the forthcoming thematic consultations. We, of course, continue to be enthusiastic and energized by your efforts, Mr. President.

Mr. Shobokshi (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to join you, Mr. President, and earlier speakers in extending sincere condolences to our Roman Catholic brethren on the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II. I would also like to extend my deep condolences and sympathy to the delegation, the Government and the people of Monaco on the death of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

I would like to express our thanks to you, Sir, for your productive efforts and for your interest in continuing consultations with delegations. You can rest assured of our willingness to cooperate with you in a constructive manner in preparing for the high-level meeting to be held in September this year.

I would also like to express our deep appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report contained in document A/59/2005, to which we are giving careful consideration. The report is of particular importance at this stage of human history, as the world is changing rapidly and new concepts are emerging that are being reflected, one way or another, in the recognized values and principles of international relations. I associate myself with the statements made by the representative of Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of Group of 77 and China.

United Nations reform must be comprehensive, practical and capable of bolstering the credibility of the United Nations and increasing its effectiveness as it confronts challenges facing the international community. Hence, the views of all Member States must be taken into consideration. The report of the Secretary-General contains numerous proposals and poses many questions that require deeper consideration with a view to exploring their implications and acknowledging their content and their impact on international relations. I would like to make a number of observations in this regard.

The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia agrees with the Secretary-General that development, security and human rights are linked. There can be no development without security, no security without development and no security or development in the absence of human rights. We share the Secretary-General's hope that the developed industrial countries will increase their official development assistance. In that connection, I would like to recall that the assistance provided by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including grants and soft development loans through bilateral and multilateral channels, represents 4 per cent of the Kingdom's gross domestic product.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia shares the Secretary-General's view, as expressed in the report, that the threats and dangers confronting the international community anywhere in the world are interrelated and necessitate concerted efforts and cooperation among all States if they are to be tackled effectively. One of those dangers and challenges is the scourge of terrorism. That horrific international phenomenon, which does not belong to any specific religion or culture, will not disappear unless the international community tackles its root causes in order to eliminate it.

With regard to a definition of terrorism, the position of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the same as that which has been adopted by Arab and Islamic countries. That position emanates from the Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism and the Organization of the Islamic Conference's Convention on Combating International Terrorism.

Human rights have been conferred by the Creator upon his creatures. They have been inherited by peoples who agreed with their noble principles and concepts derived from divine religions and international instruments. However, political interests and certain notions and philosophies prevalent in a world characterized by double standards and the illusion that values and concepts running counter to the religions, faiths and cultures of others can be imposed have begun to intrude on the principles of human rights and to control them in terms of time, place, subject and persons.

The report of the Secretary-General contains some recommendations on human rights that merit consideration. The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia does not agree that the terms of reference and role of the Commission on Human Rights should be linked with the resolutions of the Security Council; we must avoid politicizing human rights and applying double standards with a view to achieving political, and not human, objectives. The Secretary-General's proposal to replace the Commission on Human Rights with a smaller, permanent Human Rights Council requires more consideration on our part. We need further details before we state our view on that proposal.

We look forward to participating in the forthcoming meetings, with a view to making further comments and expressing our views on the other matters addressed by the report of the Secretary-General.

Mr. Gillerman (Israel): Allow me to begin by extending Israel's deepest condolences to our colleagues from the Observer Mission of the Holy See and the Permanent Missions of Poland and Italy, as well as to the millions throughout the Christian world, and beyond it, who mourn the passing of Pope John Paul II. Israel considered him a great man, a champion of freedom, an architect of reconciliation and a true friend of the Jewish people. We will sorely miss him.

Allow me, as well, to express our deep sympathies to the ruling family and the Principality of Monaco on the passing of Prince Rainier III. He was a formidable leader and an exemplary individual, and his legacy will not soon be forgotten.

Israel congratulates the Secretary-General on his ambitious report entitled "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005), whose scope and significance corresponds to the breadth, depth and weight of the challenges we face today.

I think we all recognize that there is a moment here: a window of opportunity that cannot, and must not, be missed. As Israel's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Silvan Shalom, has stated,

> "It is not too late to renew our commitment to the purposes for which the United Nations was founded. And it is not too late to work for an international community that will reflect those values fully, that will be uncompromising in combating intolerance against people of all faiths and ethnicities, that will reject moral equivalence, that will call evil by its name."

As was recently recalled during the General Assembly's twenty-eighth special session, convened to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the liberation

of the Nazi concentration camps, both the United Nations and Israel were founded on the ashes of the Holocaust. We are a people that believes deeply in the ideals of the United Nations, and whose history is a testament to the need for those ideals to be respected.

The Secretary-General's report sets out a broad agenda with a view to preparing the United Nations to be an effective force in facing the challenges of the twenty-first century. There is much work that needs to be done, and my comments today will relate to only part of that agenda.

The Secretary-General is right to recognize the fundamental interconnectedness of development, security and human rights. As the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change has noted, we are each responsible for each other's security. We need to re-imagine the concept of effective multilateral partnership and devise strategies to meet the legitimate needs of States while ensuring that States meet the legitimate expectations that the international community has of them.

As the Secretary-General has observed, while there are some States that lack the will to live up to their responsibilities, many States are willing to meet their international obligations but lack the capacity to do so fully. Those well-meaning States require a genuine partnership that focuses on development, capacity-building and establishing responsible, transparent and accountable self-governing institutions. We need to work with those States to address the deep problems of poverty and hunger and to combat epidemics such as malaria and HIV/AIDS. We need also to ensure sustainable development without environmental degradation and an atmosphere free from armed conflict where the rights to freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom to a dignified life are respected.

At the same time, all States — in all stages of development — must accept that the claim to sovereignty confers not just rights but also obligations. In an age of catastrophic terrorism, and as a result of the interconnectedness of our world, we all have a vested interest in the promotion of democratic rule, the empowerment of women and advancing a culture of tolerance and mutual respect, not just between States but also within them.

The Secretary-General refers in his report to the decline in prestige of the General Assembly and its diminishing contribution to the Organization's activities. Israel is a strong supporter of the efforts to revitalize the General Assembly so as to reflect changing realities, so that it can become a more relevant and meaningful voice on issues of universal concern and can allocate its time and resources in a manner befitting global priorities.

We welcome the Secretary-General's call, in support of that of the High-level Panel, for bold measures to rationalize, streamline and reform the work of the General Assembly. For too long, the General Assembly's agenda has been filled with anachronistic items that annually produce repetitive debates and resolutions. Its great asset as a forum for universal dialogue has been undermined by those seeking to hijack universal issues in pursuit of a selective and politicized agenda. We must recommit ourselves to a General Assembly that is a forum for constructive dialogue, not a stage for acrimony and divisiveness.

Nowhere have these shortcomings been more evident than in the treatment of Middle East issues in the Assembly. The multitude of anachronistic, repetitive and one-sided resolutions and their associated mechanisms not only represent an unjustifiable burden on the time and resources of the United Nations, but they undermine the Assembly's credibility and reputation. There is no justification for treating these items as somehow immune from the reform agenda, especially since their effective and timely treatment will, for many, be a partial measure of the success or failure of the reform and revitalization process. As the parties in the region work towards re-energizing the Middle East peace process and realizing their mutual rights and obligations, it is especially important that the General Assembly find a way to bring an end to the counter-productive role that it has played in this field for so long.

As the Secretary-General, as recently as yesterday in Geneva, and the High-level Panel have noted, similar problems plague the Commission on Human Rights, perhaps even more starkly. As many have recognized, the legitimacy of that institution has been fundamentally eroded by States with notorious human rights records, which have used it as a shield and as a sword against politically convenient targets. We agree with the Secretary-General that the solution to this issue cannot come in the form of establishing a new body with universal membership. At the same

time, we would caution that the merits of establishing a Human Rights Council of limited membership should be judged not only by its form but also by its substance, and by the actual standing of the members elected to it.

Finally, we would like to make some brief remarks on the very important question of terrorism. The report entitled "In Larger Freedom" adds the Secretary-General's voice to that of the High-level Panel in recognizing that State use of force is adequately regulated under international legal norms and in affirming that no cause or grievance can justify the deliberate targeting of innocents. Those statements are in turn echoed in numerous Security Council resolutions, most recently Security Council resolution 1566 (2004); in annual General Assembly resolutions on measures to eliminate international terrorism; and in numerous counter-terrorism conventions. Quite simply, the view that the claimed right to resist occupation can justify or excuse acts of terrorism is untenable as a matter of law and morality.

The statements of principle contained in the Secretary-General's report and in the High-level Panel report on these questions meet with the approval of the overwhelming majority of States, reflect international legal principles and respond to the concerns of the world's citizens in the face of the contemporary terrorist threat. Israel is hopeful that the recent conclusion of the nuclear terrorism convention, as well as the reports and resolutions that I have referred to, will bring new momentum to the conclusion of an effective law-enforcement instrument in the form of the comprehensive convention against terrorism, which can tolerate no false distinction between good and bad terrorism. There is much, beyond this, that the United Nations still needs to do in its efforts to fight terrorists and confront the regimes that aid or tolerate them, but concluding the comprehensive convention, without eroding its language and effectiveness, would no doubt be an important step in the right direction.

There is sometimes a tendency in large institutions to focus on process rather than substance. The United Nations is no exception in that regard. For us to take full advantage of the moment and to realize the core recommendations embodied in the Secretary-General's report, we must not confuse paper with progress. The goal should be an institution that is engaged, and is seen and felt by the citizens of the world to be engaged, in meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century in a constructive, meaningful, efficient and non-politicized way. The success of the reform must be judged by the results it produces, rather than merely by changes in form or architecture.

As I mentioned, Israel is a country that believes deeply in the founding principles of the United Nations. But it is also a country that has been affected by some of the shortcomings of this institution and its modes of operation – one that to this day remains unable to participate and contribute fully as an equal member of the United Nations, in accordance with the principle of sovereign equality. We are keen to work together with Member States to achieve real results for the benefit of the citizens we all represent and in furtherance of the noble ideals on which this Organization was founded.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset, Mr. President, to echo the statements made by preceding speakers in extending our deep condolences on the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II and of Prince Rainier III of Monaco.

Let me first express our deep gratitude to you, Sir, for having organized this important meeting of the General Assembly as well as our appreciation of your tireless efforts to properly and efficiently prepare for the high-level plenary meeting to be held prior to the sixtieth session of the General Assembly in September. We would also like to thank you for having given us the opportunity to express our views on the Secretary-General's report entitled "In Larger Freedom: towards security, development and human rights for all" (A/59/2005) and submitted under items 45 and 55 of the agenda.

We would like to reiterate our readiness to fully cooperate with you, Sir, and to support you in steering the comprehensive preparations that are underway for a process that will be transparent and open to all Member States, under your wise leadership and direction, in preparation for the high-level plenary meeting during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. In that context, the delegation of the State of Qatar would echo the statements made by the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Chairman of the Group of 77 and China on the report on behalf of their respective groups.

Operative paragraph 2 of resolution 58/291 of 6 May 2004 and the second preambular paragraph of General Assembly resolution 59/145 of 17 December 2004 define the purpose of this high-level meeting. We

are aware that the inclusive review to be conducted next September will focus on the progress achieved in implementing the obligations contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration — resolution 55/2 — including internationally agreed development goals and the partnership required for their realization. The high-level meeting will also assess the progress made at the national, regional and international levels in the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, on the basis of a comprehensive report to be submitted by the Secretary-General.

The delegation of Qatar noted with interest the Secretary-General's current report in that regard (A/59/2005). We are convinced of the need to develop the concepts and mechanisms now available to the multilateral international system in facing the challenges, threats and dangers posed to international peace and security at the beginning of this century, particularly in the light of recent international and regional developments, primarily in the Middle East region. Of particular interest to developing countries is balanced and sustainable development, including the fight against hunger, poverty and the spread of diseases; this will require the international community's renewed interest and support.

In considering the report of the Secretary-General — which raises extremely important issues and offers valuable proposals and observations — we need to conduct a cautious, in-depth study and to hold national, regional and international consultations before reaching any conclusions for adoption in September. In that connection, we stress that it is essential that the outcome of the September high-level meeting strike a genuine balance among the issues and recommendations set out in the Secretary-General's report — that is, a balance between issues related to development and social progress and those related to international peace and security — taking into account the mandate in resolutions 58/291 and 59/145. It is also important to review the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and to take into consideration the views and suggestions of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China.

My delegation is fully prepared to cooperate effectively at all levels to ensure that the September high-level plenary meeting has a successful outcome, based on the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and resulting in resolutions aimed at establishing a more balanced and just multilateral collective international system that reflects the concerns of peoples and their aspirations to development, prosperity, peace and security.

The second Summit of the South, to be held in the State of Qatar from 12 to 16 June 2005, will represent a good opportunity for the Group of 77 and China to effectively contribute to and support the objectives of major United Nations conferences, particularly those related to development and the economy. It will also be an opportune time to prepare for the September meeting of world leaders.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to express our great sadness at the passing of Pope John Paul II. His death is a great loss, because he was a true icon of peace. When he visited Syria in 2001, he prayed at the church of Saint Ananias in Damascus, where Saint Paul was baptized before the people of Damascus helped him to escape from his persecutors and to spread Christianity to Europe and throughout the world. The President of the Syrian Arab Republic expressed his condolences by attending the Pope's funeral in honour of the pontiff's great role and prestige.

I should also like to express our heartfelt condolences to the people and the ruling family of the Principality of Monaco on the death of Prince Rainier III, who successfully guided his country's economic progress.

I should also like to express to you, Mr. President, the Syrian delegation's appreciation for your efforts to ensure the best possible preparations for the September summit. I commend you for leading an open-ended, transparent and inclusive preparatory process. Syria is fully prepared to cooperate with all other Member States to make the process a success within the framework of the work plan presented in that regard.

The report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005) is an initiative that merits our full, serious and careful consideration. As a contribution that supplements other inputs — particularly the views expressed previously by Member States and those being expressed in this round of deliberations — the report will help us ensure the success of this very important process. That, we hope, will lead us to truly comprehensive and balanced reform of the United Nations as a whole.

In that connection, my delegation associates itself with the important statements made by the representative of Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. I would also like to refer to the very important statement issued by the Group of Arab States on 22 February 2005 concerning the reform process, following the December 2004 issuance of the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565).

The United Nations was established nearly 60 years ago, rising out of the ashes of a destructive war. The principles and purposes of the Charter still retain their vitality and their strong relevance to today's world; this makes commitment to those principles and purposes very important as we prepare for the September summit. Moreover, the recent marked developments and changes on the international scene mean that significant changes must be made so that the United Nations can maintain its vitality and assume an even greater role in international affairs.

Accordingly, I should like to join many previous speakers in emphasizing that it is essential that the United Nations approach the maintenance of international peace and security from a perspective that does not maintain an unjust state of affairs or accept a fait accompli that is incompatible with the principles of international legality and justice or that supports a policy of applying double standards to identical or similar situations. We strongly believe that such an approach would eventually yield negative results, particularly in highly sensitive and dangerous regions such as the Middle East and Africa.

In that context, we continue to stress that the General Assembly's role in multilateralism must be accorded all due importance in these discussions, since the Assembly is the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations. It is essential that our deliberations deal substantively with issues that will enable the General Assembly to strengthen its capacity to meet current challenges, instead of focusing on strengthening the Security Council's authority in a way that causes an imbalance among United Nations bodies and that undermines the Assembly's role in new international circumstances that could tempt some to use force pre-emptively on a variety of pretexts.

Contrary to what was said in an earlier statement, the main obstacle to the revitalization of the role of the United Nations is not its agenda or the fact that it is dealing with very important issues, such as the question of the Middle East, but, rather, the failure of a few States to respect its resolutions and decisions.

In earlier statements on the report of the High-level Panel, Arab States have emphasized their rejection of the right to resort to humanitarian or other intervention which has no basis in the Charter or in international law. In that regard, we want to stress the importance of using accurate terminology. In accordance with the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States, and in order not to undermine the peace, stability or sovereignty of States, which are safeguarded by the Charter, we believe that we should not use the pretext of the needs of the twenty-first century to restrict the concept of State sovereignty so as to allow intervention. Neither should the concept of sovereignty revert to its nineteenth-century definition so as to relax restrictions on the use of force and allow so-called preventive action.

The delegation of Syria is fully confident that we will give proper consideration to the language of Article 51 of the Charter, which gives States the right to legitimate self-defence in the event of an attack, in accordance with United Nations practice, international law and international jurisprudence.

Syria, which has suffered as a result of terrorism and its horrors, proposed in 1986 — and was the first State to officially do so — that the United Nations convene an international conference to define terrorism and to distinguish it from the legitimate struggle of peoples for freedom and independence. We welcome the fact that a large number of States are supporting the recommendation contained in the report of the Secretary-General with a view to agreeing on such a definition, in the light of the successful experience in this regard of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism. A few days ago, we welcomed agreement on the draft convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. We believe that any definition or discussion that does not take into account the root causes of terrorism, which include foreign occupation and political and economic injustice, will not lead to effective strategic action to confront terrorism, including State terrorism.

The report's recommendations on weapons of mass destruction are fragmentary and incomplete. We would like, therefore, to recall the position of the Non-Aligned Movement that priority should be given to achieving nuclear disarmament and to ensuring an effective and complete ban on all weapons of mass destruction.

Non-proliferation must accompany disarmament. We regret that the Secretary-General's report did not deal with the establishment of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We would like that issue to be emphasized again in our next round of discussions, particularly in the light of the initiative presented to the Security Council by Syria on behalf of the Arab Group in December 2003 to declare the Middle East a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons (see A/58/667).

The idea of establishing an intergovernmental Peacebuilding Commission within the United Nations is very important and deserves due consideration. The work of such a body should be overseen by the relevant United Nations organs, in particular the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Clearly, the United Nations should play an important role in crisis prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding, thereby saving millions of lives. In this context, we support the report's recommendation on strengthening the United Nations in the area of peacekeeping and on actions that would lead to the achievement of that objective.

In previous statements, we have addressed the causes of paralysis in the work of the Commission on Human Rights: the politicization of human rights issues and the use of the Commission to level accusations against and to put pressure on States. We believe that any attempt to deal with the shortcomings of the Commission should start with putting an end to the politicization of its work, avoiding selectivity and double standards. If we are to restore the credibility of international action in the area of human rights, the issue of replacing the Commission on Human Rights with a Human Rights Council must be further explored, taking into account the need to avoid rash decisions and drawing conclusions that will not benefit the work of the United Nations in this area.

Security Council reform is one of the main issues before the international community. We believe in the imperative need to reform the Council and expand the membership in its two categories, permanent and non-permanent, so as to ensure the transparency and credibility of the Council and the equitable representation of the developing countries and all cultures and civilizations. We believe that the credibility of the Security Council can be safeguarded only if its mandate is respected, if it is not subjected to the hegemony and domination of certain members and if its mechanisms are not misused to serve specific policies, as has happened with regard to a number of resolutions adopted in recent years.

That issue was discussed at the Arab Summit held recently in Algiers, and we support the guidelines adopted there by Arab leaders. We believe that any expansion of Council membership must include fair representation for Arab States. As for the two models presented in the Secretary-General's report, we believe that further consultation and consideration is required among the general membership of this international Organization.

Despite the fact that the section entitled "Freedom from want" emphasizes some of the demands made by the developing countries concerning official development assistance and the reduction of the debt burden, most of the recommendations do not specify means or measures to ensure the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) or the implementation of pledges made during major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields, without conditionalities or oppressive measures.

Although the Secretary-General has emphasized the relationship among security, development and human rights, the report does not deal with the circumstances and the suffering of peoples under foreign occupation or stress the importance of ending such occupation so as to ensure that those peoples can enjoy development in all its aspects.

With regard to strengthening of the role of the Economic and Social Council — one of the main issues in United Nations reform — it was expected that, with respect to the Council's work, the report would make recommendations providing it with a concrete role in following up implementation of the MDGs and dealing with shortfalls in their implementation as one of its priorities, in addition to strengthening the contributions that United Nations agencies can make through the

Economic and Social Council. In general, we believe that, if we have the political will necessary to build on some of the concepts elucidated in the report in that area, some of those aspirations could truly be fulfilled.

Syria will continue to participate effectively in the preparations that you, Mr. President, are making for the very important summit to be held in September. We are fully confident that, thanks to your efforts and with the help of the facilitators, we will achieve the required results through consensus, thereby safeguarding unity in our work and strengthening the role of the United Nations as it faces future challenges.

Mr. Sen (India): We welcome your initiative, Sir, in convening this series of plenary meetings of the General Assembly to consider the Secretary-General's report "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all". The report is well structured and well intentioned and sets out the issues that need to be addressed. We hope that these deliberations will set the stage for constructive and meaningful discussions at the thematic consultations that will be conducted by the facilitators. We reiterate our commitment to continuing to participate actively and to contribute to the work ahead of us in order to reach broad agreement on the different issues under consideration with a view to achieving balanced outcomes.

I would like to join my colleagues in mourning the passing away of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III of Monaco and of His Holiness Pope John Paul II. We feel that the best way of mourning Pope John Paul II is to act on his words. On 13 November 1987, he expressed the hope that relationships of exchange and the mechanism of finance can be reformed before short-sightedness and egoism degenerate into irremediable conflicts. On 19 November 1994, he stated that the United Nations is the focal point of a widespread vivid consciousness of the need to address the grave imbalances that undermine world peace because they undermine justice and equity in relations between peoples, and concluded that the fiftieth anniversary appeared to be a conspicuous opportunity for necessary reform and amendment. Therefore, the summit cannot just be a summit for the Millennium Development Goals. It has to be a summit for the reform of the international economy and its institutions and of the United Nations, a summit for ending the grave imbalances in the international economy, in the Security Council, and in the United Nations.

We agree with the Secretary-General that we need to see the Millennium Development Goals as part of an even larger development agenda. In our view, the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits — particularly the Brussels Programme of Action, the Almaty Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy for the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, which seek to address respectively the special needs of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States — should form part of that development agenda. We would be supportive of the consideration of measures that seek to address the problems faced by commodity-dependent and low-income developing countries.

My delegation associates itself fully with the statements made by the representatives of Malaysia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and of Jamaica, on behalf of the Group of 77. I would draw attention to the need mentioned by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica to address systemic issues. That has become a matter of urgent practical necessity. When the Bretton Woods institutions were created, it was in the context of Keynesian demand management to promote high levels of employment. The chains fell from the poor. In the past two decades, in places like sub-Saharan Africa, the International Monetary Fund picked those chains up and placed them back on their shoulders. The medieval highwayman at least took from the rich and gave to the poor; the present international economic system takes from the poor and gives to the rich through negative resource flows, low commodity prices, poor market access and the like.

The centrality of development can therefore be retrieved only if the United Nations takes control of the international economic agenda. Let us not forget that concessional aid, internationally created reserve assets and sustainable development were first debated and decided in the United Nations; the Bretton Woods institutions followed. The Millennium Development Goals cannot be achieved without implementing the 0.7 per cent target for official development assistance in a time-bound manner — incidentally, Monterrey was a consensus, but if consensus could make a difference, there would have been no need for the Sachs report — and innovative financing.

We welcome the call to conclude the Doha round of trade negotiations by 2006. In our view, measures should be adopted to operationalize the development

dimension in the outcome of trade negotiations. The High-level Meeting of the General Assembly in September must give a political direction in that regard to the Hong Kong ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in December, especially on agricultural subsidies, non-agricultural market access, trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights, services, non-tariff barriers, the special safeguard mechanism, and the principle of special and differential treatment. That is especially critical because of the attempt in negotiations on non-agricultural market access to eliminate the flexibilities for developing countries in paragraph 8 of annex B of the July 2004 package at the WTO. That strikes at the heart of special and differential treatment. Incidentally, we saw the unsuccessful attempt in the Statistical Commission recently to eliminate indicators for monitoring Millennium Development Goal 8. Practical steps are needed to overcome the participation deficit of small developing countries on account of their under-representation in international economic decision-making and norm-setting.

Our societies do not live on bread alone, but also on solidarity and self-reliance. India has written off the debt of the seven highly indebted poor countries and will continue with its economic and scientific initiatives, such as Team 9 involving a concessional credit of $500 million and technology transfer to West Africa, further cooperation with the New Partnership for Africa's Development, continued cooperation through the India-Brazil-South Africa initiative, as well as the satellite and fibre-optic connectivity mission in Africa. We welcome the recognition given by the Secretary-General to the need to address with urgency the special needs of Africa and we support his proposal to develop and implement a 10-year plan for capacity-building within the African Union. We hope to see commitments for concrete and implementable decisions.

We would strongly counsel against a nihilistic approach to the Secretary-General's report, for very practical reasons. If we adopt such an approach, we can do nothing about a future in which there may be occasions when force is used, more occasions when laws are made, and still more frequent occasions when a certain economic agenda is followed. The economic and security system is gerrymandered in the interests of the rich and the strong. Only if we engage actively can we ensure that no country in the United Nations is too weak to influence the United Nations; correct substantially the imbalance; and ensure that the use of force is constrained, that the economic agenda is truly development oriented and decisively influenced by developing countries, and that laws are made by the General Assembly. It is in that context that we are happy that the Ad hoc Committee of the General Assembly adopted at the beginning of this month the text of a draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. That paves the way for the adoption of a comprehensive convention on terrorism during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly can be revitalized only through action; taking decisions according to the approved rules of procedure, not an imposed consensus; asserting control over long-term questions of peace and security, including disarmament and arms control, under Articles 11 and 14 of the Charter; elaborating international law and human rights, including oversight of all human rights machinery, under Article 13.1; controlling Secretariat restructuring, including finance, personnel and management; setting the international economic agenda; and establishing the principles of oversight and accountability through actually selecting permanent members of the Security Council.

That revitalization cannot be accomplished through a mere rationalization of agenda and meetings or by transferring items from one weak body to another. The General Assembly's revitalization is necessary to guide and direct the other organs of the system and thereby fully exercise functions envisaged under Article 10 of the Charter. In fact, the source of legitimacy for the Security Council is the support of the General Assembly. The weakness of the General Assembly and the strength of the Security Council have become a zero-sum game. The relationship between the two is dialectical, as we have had occasion to say before. The weakness of the General Assembly means a weak Security Council in terms of legitimacy and support, because then the United Nations becomes top-heavy, unbalanced and, therefore, weak and lacking in legitimacy. A strong General Assembly means a strong Security Council.

During the decision on the 1971 Namibia case, Justice Fitzmaurice — incidentally, a right-wing conservative — stated that it was to keep the peace, not to change the world order, that the Security Council was set up. The attempt to change the world order has

led to much disquiet and questioning, creating a legitimacy deficit that, in some cases, inevitably leads to a performance deficit. The question, therefore, is not one of efficiency or enlargement of the permanent membership, but of efficiency through enlargement. Only such an enlargement can include areas that are affected by decisions as well as countries that can contribute resources and capabilities and, above all, contribute to optimal decisions and their wide acceptance, thereby minimizing the use of coercion and force and increasing the power of persuasion and acceptance.

That is why India has been working with Brazil, Germany and Japan and in cooperation with countries of the African Union for Security Council reform that would increase the number of permanent members and of non-permanent seats by including developed and developing countries in an expanded Council. Without the expansion of that political basis, Security Council action will not be authoritative and hence not effective: it will lack political legitimacy, even if it has legality.

As for periodic elections leading to accountability, have they so far carried forward the agenda of developing countries or ended their alienation? Accountability can be ensured only if those selected are given the power for change through permanent membership and then held accountable and their performance subjected to stringent scrutiny through a review.

The encroachment on the powers of the General Assembly continues. Transparent working methods have not been adopted to any significant degree. Only new permanent members selected by the General Assembly with a clear mandate and held accountable through review by the Assembly can make a difference. Circumstances surrounding Security Council resolution 1441 (2002) of 8 November 2002 completely undercut model B or any variant thereof: when the five permanent members were divided and the non-permanent members could have made a difference, the latter stood aside, urging the permanent five to agree among themselves and pledging their support for any agreement so reached.

Democratization is essentially the dispersal of power — a transformation of the balance of forces. To argue otherwise is to believe that democracy is simply a polite name for continued dominance. Are some opposing voices coming from within the permanent five because of the fear of lack of effectiveness or to prevent even the slightest erosion of dominance? Is the talk of consensus a means of preventing dangerous divisions or a means of preventing democratization? If we fear division, then should we sit back and do nothing on many other important questions relating to economic development that may also cause division? To have a total consensus, should we abandon parliamentary democracy and voting and replace them with a system of consensus decided upon by a dominant elite? It is said that the ancient Greeks voted with stones. Should we then have the consensus of tombstones? We began our search for consensus — in the sense of the broadest possible agreement — at the meeting called by the group of four countries comprising Brazil, Japan, Germany and India on 31 March 2005. We shall consult with all and take their ideas on board. We cannot believe that a minority uniting for consensus is a consensus and not a contradiction in terms.

There is a broad difference between the three European members of the permanent five, on the one hand, and the two non-European members, on the other. The two non-European members have opposed broad agreement and early decisions and have repeatedly emphasized the virtues of consensus and the evil of artificial deadlines. Thus, there is clearly no consensus among the permanent five. How, then, can one expect consensus among 191 Members? Consensus, like charity, should surely begin at home. If consensus is considered such a vital principle, why not adopt it in the Security Council — with the abolition of the veto — for taking all important decisions? And what can be more important than the use of coercion, whether sanctions or military force — truly matters of life and death? They know perfectly well that that would paralyse decision-making in the Security Council.

But there is no hesitation in paralysing decision-making in the General Assembly. By a curious coincidence, their statements are entirely silent on the revitalization of the General Assembly. That silence on the revitalization of the Assembly is in sharp contrast to the anxiety to prevent expansion of the permanent membership of the Security Council. To speak of artificial deadlines after a decade spent in consultations on this issue is a little extreme. To say that developing countries, including those from Africa, should be included and then to propose a process that would exclude them

indefinitely is no great service to the developing world that Group of 77 represents and that — to use Jawaharlal Nehru's moving phrase — carries the burdens and sorrows of the world in a kind of twilight between peace and war. Behind the call for consensus, one can therefore discern the outlines of dominance, buttressed in the distance by the threat of the use of the veto. The veto itself would be diluted by the enlargement of the permanent membership, although it would be diluted still more by its extension. The African Union, therefore, has supported such an extension.

The Secretary-General has rightly said that consensus is preferable but should not be an excuse for postponing action, and he has advised that we take a decision before the summit. He reiterated his views on the matter a couple of days ago in Geneva. An early harvest is not likely to be a bitter harvest, but a late harvest may be made rotten by untimely rain.

With regard to the debate on the use of force, we believe that Article 51 is clear enough. The framers of the Charter never intended that article to cover anything beyond its text. That view has the support of the decision and the opinions of the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, the International Court of Justice. We believe that the Charter gives full authority to the Security Council to preserve international peace and security from threats, whether they be latent or patent. If the Council has experienced certain difficulties in assessing the seriousness of threat in any instance, it is owing to the lack of political will of the members of the Security Council rather than to any lack of authority.

We support the Secretary-General's appeal to improve deployment options, including through the creation of a strategic reserve and a standing civilian police capacity — two initiatives that have been targeted to optimize rapid and effective deployment. We believe that the synergy or the interlocking of capacities between the United Nations and regional organizations and arrangements must not be a substitute for — and should not be at the expense of — United Nations peacekeeping, which, through its universality and experience, occupies a niche that is perhaps unparalleled.

We fully subscribe to the notion that peacekeepers and peacebuilders have a solemn responsibility to adhere to the rule of law, and especially to respect the rights of the people whom it is their mission to help. We have always maintained that peacekeepers can lay a vital foundation in the task of peacebuilding if they embody, in their outlook and behaviour, a long-standing democratic and multicultural tradition.

With regard to the Peacebuilding Commission, we look forward to receiving from the Secretary-General in the coming weeks a detailed paper that provides further information on the Secretariat's thinking on the functions and powers of that proposed body and on the lines of authority, responsibility and reporting so as to facilitate further intergovernmental consideration of the matter.

Because of the paucity of time and the lateness of the hour, I have not been able to deal with several issues, such as disarmament and non-proliferation or human rights and democracy, on many of which our views are well known. We assure you, Mr. President, that we shall work closely with all Member States to reach early decisions on various aspects of the matrix of issues that we are called upon to deal with. The imperative of ensuring that the 2005 summit is a resounding success for the developing countries demands no less from all of us. We are confident that the General Assembly will be equal to the challenge and will strengthen its great legacy and not allow it to be further weakened, that it will move forward and not let itself be moved backward, and that its creative energy will move beyond the constraints that some seek to place upon it.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): The United Republic of Tanzania joins others in paying tribute to you, Mr. President, for having initiated these consultations. We see this process as critical to the need to reach a basic understanding in advance of the high-level summit meeting that is due to take place in five months' time. This is a collective responsibility, which we must discharge with a great sense of urgency and with positive participation.

My delegation too associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Malawi on behalf of the African Group, by the representative of Jamaica as Chairman of the Group of 77 and China, and by the representative of Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The report of the Secretary-General, "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005), has not fully satisfied

everyone. But that was not the idea. In our case, we find it wanting on issues relating to trade, commodities, investment flows and refugees. The report should also have been premised on an overarching contextual perspective embracing all the phenomena of globalization as it impinges on the larger freedoms referred to in the report. However, however modest, the report is a focused guide in addressing the urgent and demanding challenges that confront the United Nations and the international community. We therefore welcome the report and commend the Secretary-General for his efforts to produce such a comprehensive document.

The report provides a basis and an opportunity for the United Nations to change and adapt to new circumstances in order to maintain its vitality and relevance. We believe that the forthcoming high-level meeting presents a unique and real opportunity for change and commitment that is bound to rejuvenate the Organization on its sixtieth birthday.

The Secretary-General's report captures the spirit, substance and vision of the Millennium Declaration, which addressed the special needs of Africa. The package approach proposed by the Secretary-General offers the desirable and the feasible, with more for everyone than is currently available. As we negotiate to get the most and the best out of the proposed package, we should endeavour to preserve its wholeness and integrity.

Never in history had the international community shown such broad unity in combating the scourge of poverty, war and underdevelopment and in valuing human rights as it did in adopting the Millennium Declaration. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) therefore represent the realization that global peace and security cannot be guaranteed without global social and economic justice. Freedom from want is key to that dimension.

In the light of the challenges that Africa faces, we applaud the special recognition accorded to it. In Africa, as in many other parts of the world, what is now needed is action. We believe that there is unprecedented enlightenment with regard to Africa, and good intentions towards it. In fact, we see a greater understanding for the predicament of Africa. But understanding is useful only if it triggers action spurred by political goodwill.

In Tanzania, we strive to match the goodwill extended to us, whether through debt relief or bilateral assistance. As a result of macroeconomic stability, we have been able to accelerate access to primary education for boys and girls by tripling the number of classrooms in the past three years, training and recruiting more teachers and instituting community-level ownership of the improvements and reforms. As a result, we believe that we can attain universal primary education, with gender balance, in the next three years and realize MDG 2 almost eight years ahead of schedule.

But that is not enough. Even with an economy that is growing at an annual rate of 5 to 6 per cent, and with declining income poverty indicators, about 35 per cent of our people are still deemed "basic needs poor", and 19 per cent "food poor". As we struggle to confront this picture of poverty and great want, we must also strive to meet the needs of those affected by the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS. It is in this regard that we see the proposal to establish a International Finance Facility as opening up an important new window for global cooperation against poverty and for achieving all of the Millennium Development Goals.

Freedom from fear is another aspiration that we all share as human beings. We therefore find great merit in the evolving notion of collective security based on a recognition that threats are interlinked and that development, security and human rights are mutually interdependent. We in the African continent, which is known for its conflicts and post-conflict rebuilding challenges, find the idea of a Peacebuilding Commission to be innovative, and one that needs to be pushed with a view to its early adoption and implementation. Equally, the proposed standing fund for timely humanitarian action in man-made emergencies and natural disasters is very commendable. However, the fund would be on a more secure footing if its resource base were more predictable.

Freedom to live in dignity is a noble ambition for all. But democracy and open markets will be accepted only for what they deliver, not for what they promise. Human rights and the protection of civilians should not be compromised by political expediency, and the rule of law must be upheld as a cardinal principle of democracy and good governance.

Our view regarding the "responsibility to protect" was succinctly articulated by my President, His Excellency Benjamin William Mkapa, during the first summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, held in Dar es Salaam last November. He said that

> "We must now stop misusing the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States to mask incidences of poor governance and unacceptable human rights abuses".

President Mkapa further noted:

> "In the aftermath of the genocide in Rwanda, and in light of the massive influx of refugees in the Great Lakes region, it is inevitable to conclude that the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of a State can no longer find unqualified, absolute legitimacy. The possibility of intervention must be placed on the table as part of a regional strategy for durable peace and security. States must firmly be placed on notice that the humanity we all share demands that we should collectively have an interest in its promotion as well as in its protection. Governments must first be held responsible for the life and welfare of their people. But there must also be common agreed rules and benchmarks that would trigger collective action, through our regional organizations and the United Nations, against Governments that commit unacceptable human rights abuses or threaten regional peace and security."

It is in that context that we agree about the need to focus on all treaties relating to the protection of civilians. Such attention, however, pertains not only to ratification, but to continuing relevance and applicability.

Consistent with the "responsibility to protect", Tanzania believes that the concept of "Convention plus" with respect to the 1951 Refugee Convention merits further attention and elaboration. We believe that a regime that focuses on the realities of protection today in conjunction with the concept of safe havens in countries of origin should be revisited and discussed with an open mind. This would also give long-overdue attention to the plight and protection of internally displaced persons throughout the world, who now far outnumber refugees.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees must be allowed to expand its mandate and to extend protection to all who are fleeing for their lives, regardless of whether they were able to cross frontiers or remain displaced internally. We also see this proposition as being in line with the system-wide coherence that the Secretary-General wishes to promote to provide humanitarian space and to ensure that humanitarian actors have safe and unimpeded access to vulnerable populations.

Finally, there is much that we can achieve by working together in unity of purpose and action, inspired by the Millennium Declaration. It is still within the reach of the Assembly to find a suitable framework for dialogue and, ultimately, consensus on what we can attain. This is an opportunity we must not pass up.

Mr. Ovia (Papua New Guinea): Mr. President, it is with sadness that I join everyone who has spoken before me to express the deepest condolences of the people and the Government of Papua New Guinea on the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, a great friend of the world, including Papua New Guinea. Pope John Paul II also took the time to visit Papua New Guinea to consecrate our first Papua New Guinean saint.

My delegation also joins others in expressing our condolences to the people and the Government of Monaco on the passing of His Serene Highness Prince Rainer III.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made earlier in the debate by the Permanent Representatives of Samoa, Ambassador Elisaia, on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum; Tuvalu's Permanent Representative, Ambassador Enele Sopoaga, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States; Jamaica's Permanent Representative, Ambassador Stafford Neil, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China; and the Malaysian Permanent Representative, Ambassador Rastam Isa, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Being one of the last speakers in the debate allows me to have had the benefit of all of the very good statements that preceded mine, and my statement will therefore be general and fairly brief.

Papua New Guinea welcomes the Secretary-General's report "In larger freedom", in which he envisions the future of our universal Organization. The report has set a timely challenge for all United Nations

Member States to discuss and make bold and decisive recommendations for our leaders during the high-level summit of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

We are confronted with the world's deeply interrelated and interconnected challenges of development, security and human rights issues and are being asked to chart a positive course forward for the next millennium.

The Secretary-General recommends the report as a balanced and integrated package giving equal weight and attention to all the pillars of peace and security, development and human rights. However, our delegation concurs with the overwhelming majority of speakers, especially those from the developing countries, who hold the view that the report is not well balanced.

We share the sentiment of the majority of developing countries that peace and security and human rights have been given greater emphasis and weight in the report than have developmental and environmental issues. We believe, however, that, since the overwhelming majority of the world's people live in poverty, for them development, environmental and survival issues are more central than others. Peace, security and human rights can be achieved when more people enjoy the benefits of prosperity and have the basic necessities of life.

From that perspective, we agree with those who hold the view that the report is lacking in many aspects, especially as concerns the importance and centrality of development issues and the plans of action discussed during the major world conferences held over the last decade and a half. These include the recently concluded Mauritius International Meeting and its Strategy for the Sustainable Development of Small Island States -- which only a few months ago was overwhelmingly endorsed by the international community -- the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and the Monterrey Consensus, to name just a few.

However, we live in hope, and, like others in the developing world, we are hopeful that all is not lost.

We hope that, with your support, Mr. President, and that of our world community, that oversight can be rectified during the consultation process, now in progress, that you are leading.

Our delegation is also optimistic that we will work together to ensure that the high-level session in September represents a win-win situation for all stakeholders of our Organization. We need to do that. The leaders of our countries, who have committed themselves to attending this year's summit meeting, are not only looking forward to joining in the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Organization, but are also hopeful that they will leave the Assembly satisfied that they are part of a better future and a better tomorrow.

I am grateful for the opportunity to provide our preliminary views on the Secretary-General's report. We will provide specific comments during the focused discussions on individual clusters in the coming weeks.

Papua New Guinea, together with other small island developing States, shares special circumstances of vulnerability and of environmental, economic and social shocks; these are well known to the Assembly.

We support the call for an enhanced role for the Economic and Social Council as the principal body charged with ensuring stronger system-wide coherence as concerns the various development and humanitarian agencies. The Council should be reformed to allow it to assess the progress of individual countries in meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

On the issue of United Nations reform, Papua New Guinea reiterates that the General Assembly is the highest deliberative decision-making and representative body. Our forefathers, the framers of the United Nations Charter, had envisioned it to be so, and we must see to it that its status is restored. The current dialogue, we hope, represents but the first step in that direction.

Similarly, Papua New Guinea has supported the enlargement of the Security Council to make it more representative and efficient and to take account of the geopolitics of our times. We support the inclusion of Japan and Germany, and, more importantly, of the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America in its ranks. The need to act decisively on this issue cannot be overemphasized, and we must capitalize on the momentum created and the enthusiasm generated thus far.

The proposal for the creation of a Human Rights Council is an interesting one, but we need fully and carefully to assess the whole proposal to be satisfied

that the new body we would be creating will serve the interests of all of the United Nations Member States equally and effectively.

On Secretariat reform, Papua New Guinea believes that what we need is a body that not only reflects current realities but also responds in a timely manner to the priorities and agendas of the whole United Nations membership.

The Secretary-General's recommendation to give greater support to regional organizations and, in some cases, subregional organizations, to engage them in more meaningful and cooperative ways is one to which we can lend our support. However, their roles must be well demarcated and defined to ensure complementarity of purpose and support, and not overlap and conflict in their mandates.

In conclusion, I firmly believe that the September summit of our leaders will be a momentous occasion for all of us to come together and act in unity of purpose for the good of our common humanity. We can ask for no better sixtieth birthday gift.

Ms. Moses (Nauru): Nauru associates itself with the intervention by the representative of Samoa on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum group in New York and the representative of Tuvalu on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States.

Nauru wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his report "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005). Nauru welcomes the report and expresses its support to the Secretary-General for his commitment to multilateralism as a key to resolving our common challenges in all of their complexities.

As my delegation continues to examine the recommendations in the report, today we will make only a brief and general observation with a view to presenting our specific suggestions in the forthcoming consultations.

It is our strong view that development and political will are the fundamental components of global resolve. In particular, they are central to the recovery and development of such small island developing States as Nauru and their achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It is therefore extremely disappointing to note that the special case of small island developing States is not more comprehensively addressed in the report, and in that respect we would like to seek assurance that issues relating to small island developing States are seriously considered during the forthcoming negotiations.

Nauru's position on Security Council reform is already known. We reiterate our support for the reform of the Security Council on the basis of model A and the inclusion of the candidacies of Japan, Germany and India for permanent seats on an expanded Security Council.

We believe that the main aims of the report are achievable, and it is with those objectives in mind that our consultations in the days ahead will be conducted.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the observer of Palestine.

Mrs. Barghouti (Palestine): On behalf of my delegation, I would like to express our heartfelt condolences to the mission of the Holy See on the passing away of His Holiness Pope John Paul II. He was a man of peace who spent his life defending and promoting freedom, justice, independence and equality for all people of all races and religions. We would also like to extend our condolences to the Principality of Monaco on the passing away of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

At the outset, allow me to take this opportunity to extend the appreciation of my delegation for the convening of this plenary meeting of the General Assembly. We commend your transparent approach, Sir, and the excellent manner in which you are conducting this preparatory process in line with the roadmap you have proposed.

My delegation has taken note of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005). While we are still examining the report, we would like to make initial observations on the many interesting and challenging recommendations proposed, which require careful study and consideration. The report is an important source that will guide our deliberations and preparations for reaching a common position on the final outcome of the High-level Meeting in September 2005.

In that regard, Palestine associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. However, we would like to put on record

our initial comments in relation to issues that are pertinent and important to my delegation.

Palestine believes that the report contains some positive elements that should be expanded upon, but we also believe that the report as a whole is not as comprehensive as was expected and ignores many of the ideas, comments and positions expressed by many delegations, including those of the Arab group.

We welcome the proposal made in the report regarding the three principles of the Organization — peace, security and human rights — and, in particular, the proposal to treat those three principles on an equal basis, recognizing their individual yet linked importance. We believe that this approach will ultimately lead to achieving a balanced outcome.

Palestine would also like to highlight the importance of the section of the report with respect to the rule of law. Strengthening the rule of law as a framework for advancing human security and prosperity is of paramount significance to my delegation. We agree with the Secretary-General's statement that "every nation that proclaims the rule of law at home must respect it abroad and that every nation that insists on it abroad must enforce it at home" (*A/59/2005, para. 133*). Yet, as we are all aware, in many places, Governments and individuals continue to violate the rule of law, often without penalty, but with deadly ramifications for the weak and the vulnerable. That is further exacerbated by a surge of impunity for some countries, in total defiance of and disrespect for international humanitarian law, compounding the multitude of widespread human rights abuses.

Clearly, adherence to the basic rule and principles of international law, as well as to the Charter and to the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, is imperative for the ultimate attainment of international peace and security. Without such adherence and respect for international law, peace, freedom and security cannot and will not be attained.

The international community has expressed and continues to express its grave concern regarding the continuation of the conflict in the Middle East, particularly the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. That remains the crux of the problem in the Middle East and indisputably threatens the maintenance of international peace and security. Irrespective of that and the dangerous repercussions it has on the maintenance of international peace and security, the report unfortunately fails to address the situation with the necessary weight and consideration.

As all are aware, the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, continues to be dangerous as a result of the unprecedented injustices that have been inflicted on the Palestinian people throughout 38 years of military occupation — an occupation that has brutally denied them their inalienable rights, including their rights to self-determination, independence and freedom. There has been no instrument of international law or noble legal principle that has not been grossly violated by the occupying Power. All of those illegal policies and practices have been carried out with impunity and in blatant contempt and disregard for international law and relevant United Nations resolutions. How can the Palestinian people live "in larger freedom", in the words of the report, when the entire population remains captive, held hostage by the brutal occupation that affects every aspect of their daily lives?

My delegation was encouraged that the report of the Secretary-General emphasized the importance of international humanitarian law, in particular the Geneva Conventions. In that context, it should be noted that the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention — in particular Additional Protocol I — set the terms of reference that govern situations of foreign occupation. In such situations, there is an occupying Power and there is an occupied people: a civilian population whose members, under international humanitarian law, are considered protected persons and whose safety and well-being the occupying Power is under an obligation to ensure. Yet the report of the Secretary-General completely neglected to address the issue of foreign occupation and its detrimental consequences on the people it occupies and on their society. In fact, the report mentioned occupation only in the section dealing with transnational terrorism, which is an issue completely different from situations of occupation.

With regard to the issue of terrorism, it is important to draw a distinction between terrorism and the right of peoples to resist occupation and to defend themselves against an occupying Power. Resistance is a legitimate right of an oppressed and occupied people and should not in any way be compared with, or confused with, condemnable acts of terror.

The report correctly stated that,

> "Terrorism is a threat to all that the United Nations stands for: respect for human rights, the rule of law, the protection of civilians, tolerance among peoples and nations, and the peaceful resolution of conflict". (*A/59/2005, para. 87*)

Yet the report also stated that "It is time to set aside debates on so-called 'State terrorism'" (*Ibid., para. 91*). Those two points seem to us not only to contradict each other, but also to dangerously exclude one form of terrorism — State terrorism — carried out by a State army in the implementation of a formal State policy. How can we set aside the debate on any manifestation or form of terrorism while the international community is still seeking to establish a common understanding of the definition of terrorism?

Palestine stands ready to participate fully in the upcoming months in the preparations for the outcome of the high-level plenary meeting. We hope that this process will continue to be as transparent and forthcoming as you have shown it can be, Mr. President. We believe that the only way in which the international community can move forward and ensure that all human beings live "in larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" is to adhere to international humanitarian and human rights law and to implement all United Nations resolutions. That needs to be done without selectivity or supremacy and based on the rule of law. Without that, we will continue to talk and fail to act. The time has come to act.

The President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker in the debate for this meeting. I call on the representative of Mexico, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and five minutes for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Rodriguez Zahar (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Mexico has requested the floor in exercise of the right of reply to place on record the fact that we believe that the biased, out-of-context assessment made by the Permanent Representative of India regarding the action of non-permanent Security Council members in the adoption of resolution 1441 (2002) was unfortunate.

The President (*spoke in French*): We have just heard the last speaker in the general consultations on the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005). In all, 83 delegations took part in the debate during the six official meetings held on 6, 7 and 8 April 2005. The discussions were characterized by comments, observations and proposals some of which were general and others specific.

First of all, I should like to thank all delegations for the kind words they addressed to me regarding the conduct of the debates and the road map that I presented to the Assembly in my letter of 24 March 2005. I should like to recall that that work plan is intended only to structure and organize our efforts in an open, inclusive and transparent manner.

I welcome the fact that members reaffirmed the central role that the Assembly must play in formulating proposals that will help our leaders take appropriate decisions aimed at implementing the Millennium Goals and United Nations reform. As members are aware, the matters under consideration are of great importance and reflect the many challenges and issues facing Member States and the United Nations.

At this stage of our discussions — which, as members know, will continue on 19 April in the form of thematic consultations — I did not consider it useful to provide members with a detailed summary of the discussions. I shall therefore confine myself to several general observations.

The great number of representatives who spoke — either on behalf of a group of States or in a national capacity — and the value and relevance of their observations and proposals once again confirmed the great interest of Member States in preparing for the September 2005 high-level plenary meeting. Moreover, they reflected the universal willingness to ensure that that meeting will yield tangible and balanced results that take account of the concerns and interests expressed by all Member States.

In that regard, many delegations noted that the meeting's objective was to assess the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields.

It was also emphasized that the high-level plenary meeting will be held during the celebration of the Organization's sixtieth anniversary and in an international context in which urgent challenges

demand immediate United Nations reform. The need to strengthen multilateralism was once again reaffirmed. The time has come, it was recalled, to take the decisions that are needed to adapt the United Nations to the realities of the twenty-first century, always bearing in mind the consequences that failure could have for the Organization. Delegations stressed that, in the process of preparing for the September 2005 high-level plenary meeting, we must avoid taking hasty action, remain pragmatic and enable Member States to build agreement on what it is possible to achieve, constantly bearing in mind that reform is a process.

Delegations welcomed the Secretary-General's timely submission of the comprehensive report that the General Assembly had requested of him in its resolution 58/291. Delegations welcomed the fact that the report is organized around three pillars — development, security and human rights — accompanied by the relevant recommendations.

In general, delegations welcomed the report as an important basis for the work of preparing the September 2005 high-level meeting. However, several delegations found that the Secretary-General's report is not sufficiently balanced, contains omissions and does not sufficiently reflect the views expressed by many Member States during the debates on the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and on the report of the Millennium Project. They also underlined the fact that the report introduces new concepts that require more thorough discussion.

It is up to Member States to work together to arrive at a common understanding on the key issues before us. For my part, I shall spare no effort in seeking the broadest possible agreement on the proposals that in due course will be submitted to our leaders for decision.

I would therefore like to invite members to put forward concrete proposals during the thematic consultations led by the 10 facilitators, to begin, as I have said, on 19 April.

As well, I wish to announce that this evening I shall circulate a draft resolution on the modalities of the September 2005 high-level meeting, subsequent to the consultations my facilitators and I held following the informal meeting held on Friday, 1 April 2005.

I encourage members to share with me any views they may have on the draft resolution as soon as possible so that, by Thursday, 14 April, at the latest, the General Assembly can consider it and adopt it, I hope, by consensus.

We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda items 45 and 55.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.